

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-07 DHA-02 OMB-01 SCA-01 OPR-02

SCCT-01 NEAE-00 A-01 AID-05 IO-13 /096 W

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O P 031421Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1430

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 42

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

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CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 6778

STUTTGART FOR ELG

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION AUG 3: SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN AND
ARAB LEAGUE CEASEFIRE EFFORTS OFFER SLIGHT HOPE; TELL ZAATAR

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EVACUATION BEGINS

REF: BEIRUT 6763

1. SUMMARY: SLIGHT MOVEMENT IN WAKE OF SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN AGREEMENT. TELL ZAATAR EVACUATION FINALLY BEGUN, WHICH MAY CLEAR WAY FOR FURTHER LOCAL ACCOMMODATIONS AND EVEN COUNTRY-WIDE CEASEFIRE. UNIVERSAL CONDEMNATION OF MURDER OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, AS KIDNAPPINGS IN WEST BEIRUT APPEAR CONTINUE AT LOWER LEVEL. WEST BEIRUT "POPULAR SECURITY FORCE" COMING INTO EXISTENCE. FRANGIE HAS CALLED CABINET MEETING, PERHAPS TO PREPARE WAY FOR DISMISSAL OF PRIME MINISTER KARAME, WHO SAYS HE WILL NOT ATTEND. MILITARY SITUATION RELATIVELY QUIET AS METN CAMPAIGN STALLED, FIGHTING IN BEIRUT CONCENTRATED IN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT, AND JEZZINE FIGHTING LARGELY ARTILLERY FIRE. END SUMMARY.

2. PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN AGREEMENT. STILL NO WORD ON ARAFAT'S TRAVEL PLANS. PLO HAS HOWEVER ANNOUNCED MEMBERSHIP OF ITS REPRESENTATION ON CEASEFIRE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE (BEIRUT 6762). JUMBLATT'S NATIONAL MOVEMENT HAS SAID WOULD PARTICIPATE, BUT HAS NOT YET NAMED DELEGATION. LEFTISTS SAY THEIR DELEGATION WILL PURSUE CERTAIN MATTERS WITH SYRIANS, INCLUDING QUESTION OF PALESTINIANS DETAINED IN SYRIA AND SYRIAN MILITARY WITHDRAWAL (BUT FROM CERTAIN AREAS, NOT FROM ALL OF LEBANON). BEIRUT PRESS NOTES REPORT FROM KUWAIT (AFP, QUOTING AL-SIASSA) ON ALLEGED SECRET SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN UNDERSTANDINGS.

3. REAL CEASEFIRE PROSPECTS. AL DEPUTY KHOLI DESCRIBES THIS WEEK AS DECISIVE IN HISTORY OF LEBANESE CONFLICT, AND HOPES ARRANGE COUNTRY-WIDE CEASEFIRE TO START AUGUST 4. HE AND GENERAL GHONEIM MET CHAMOUN, KAMAL ASSAD AND PATRIARCH KHOREICHE AUG. 3. THEY ARE TO MEET AGAIN AUG 3 WITH CHAMOUN AND OTHERS, AS WELL AS WITH LEADERS IN WEST BEIRUT. DESPITE SKEPTICISM IN MOST QUARTERS, SOME PEOPLE ARE OPTIMISTIC CEASEFIRE WILL SUCCEED, INCLUDING PRIMIN KARAME, WHO DESCRIBES SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN AGREEMENT AS "THE CONFIDENTIAL

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BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE CRISIS," AND EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HERE (SEE BEIRUT 6776). LAA SOURCES TELL US THEY SEE ATTITUDE OF CHAMOUN AS PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO SUCCESSFUL CEASEFIRE. WE CONTINUE RECEIVE REPORTS OF SYRIAN RESUPPLY OF WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION TO CHRISTIANS. ONE POSSIBLE SCENARIO FOR NEXT DAYS MAY BE: (1) SUCCESSFUL EVACUATION OF TELL ZAATAR; (2) MOVEMENT TOWARDS A COUNTRY-WIDE CEASEFIRE UNDER ARAB LEAGUE AUSPICES;

AND (3) QUIET PALESTINIAN ABANDONMENT OF TELL ZAATAR.
BEYOND THAT, WE WOULD NOT VENTURE ANY PREDICTIONS.

4. TELL ZAATAR EVACUATION. ICRC EVACUATION OF
TELL ZAATAR WOUNDED AT LAST SUCCESSFULLY BEGUN
EARLY AUGUST 3 (SEPTTEL).

5. KIDNAPPINGS. UNIVERSAL INDIGNATION AFTER BODY OF DIRECTOR
OF FINANCE KHALIL SALEM FOUND BY NEW WEST BEIRUT
"POPULAR SECURITY FORCES" IN TRUNK OF HIS OWN
CAR AUGUST 2, INCLUDING EXPRESSIONS OF REGRET FROM
IBRAHIM KOLEILAT, WHO SAID ASSASSINATION WAS INTENDED
TO FORCE CHRISTIANS TO LEAVE WEST BEIRUT, AND PLO
SPOKESMAN AND JUMBLATT, BOTH OF WHOM CHARGED
FOREIGN SECRET AGENTS WERE RESPONSIBLE. RAYMOND
EDDE SAYS BOTH FATAH AND NEW BEIRUT "POPULAR
SECURITY FORCE" RESPONSIBLE, SINCE FAILED PREVENT
IT. AL-MUHARRIR SAYS PLO HAS OFFERED 10,000 LEBANESE
POUNDS REWARD FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO ARREST OF
ASSASSINS. AS-SAFIR SAYS ASSASSINATION WAS EFFORT TO
DISTRUB PRECARIOUS MOSLEM-GREEK ORTHODOX
COEXISTENCE. SAEB SALAM SAID "I SPEAK IN THE NAME OF
EVERY MOSLEM BELIEVER TO SAY THAT WE SACRIFICE
OURSELVES FOR OUR CHRISTIAN BROTHERS IN WEST BEIRUT."
RADIO AMCHITE CLAIMED KIDNAPPINGS CONTINUE IN WEST
BEIRUT, WITH 40 DISAPPEARED AUGUST 3, THESE MAY BE STRIKING
EMPLOYEES OF MINFINANCE WHO WERE REPORTEDLY ARRESTED FOR
INVESTIGATION BY NEW SECURITY FORCES (SEE BELOW); OTHER
SOURCES REPORT THAT NO MORE THAN 12 PERSONS HAVE ACTUALLY
BEEN KIDNAPPED IN PAST FIVE DAYS.

6. WEST BEIRUT SECURITY. NEW UNIFIED WEST BEIRUT
POPULAR SECURITY FORCE COMING INTO BEING. WE
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UNDERSTAND ARAFAT AND JUMBLATT HAVE AGREED FORM
JOINT MILITARY POLICE IN AREAS OF THEIR CONTROL. WE HAVE
ALSO HEARD THAT SOME 200 LAA SOLDIERS PHYSICALLY
DETAILED TO NEW JOINT SECURITY ORGANIZATION AUGUST 3. (IF
TRUE, THIS WOULD ALMOST TOTALLY WIPE OUT AVAILABLE ENLISTED
LAA RESOURCES IN BEIRUT AREA.) FATAH, FOR ITS PART, HAS
ESTABLISHED NUMBER OF ROADBLOCKS ON SIDE STREETS ALONG
CORNICHE MAZRAA IN ATTEMPT TO CONTROL KIDNAPPINGS IN AREA.

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O P 031421Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1431

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVO PRIORITY 43

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 6778

STUTTGART FOR ELG

7. CABINET MEETING. PRESIDENT FRANGIE HAS CALLED
CABINET MEETING FOR 1000 AUGUST 4. PRIME MINISTER
KARAME HAS SAID HE WILL NOT ATTEND, SINCE HE DOES
NOT RECOGNIZE THAT FRANGIE IS STILL PRESIDENT OF
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LEBANON. AFTER AL DEPUTY TRIED TO PERSUADE HIM

TO CHANGE HIS MIND, KARAME REPORTEDLY SAID HE WOULD ATTEND IF FRANGIE WOULD RENOUNCE HIS EARLIER DISMISSAL OF PHILIP TAKLA AS FOREIGN MINISTER, UNDO STEPS HE HAS TAKEN TOWARDS PARTITION, AND ASSUME CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE OF ARBITER AMONG LEBANESE INSTEAD OF A PARTISAN ROLE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT FRANGIE'S INTENT IS TO PREPARE WAY TO DISMISS KARAME. PUBLICLY, IT IS UNDERSTOOD MEETING WILL CONSIDER REACTIVATION OF GOVT ADMINISTRATION. PRIVATELY, WE UNDERSTAND MEETING WILL CONSIDER NOMINATIONS OF LEBANESE MEMBERS TO SYRIAN-LEBANESE-PALESTINIAN COMMITTEE AND APPOINTMENT OF REPLACEMENT FOR ELIAS SARKIS AS CENTRAL BANK GOVERNOR. CABINET LAST MET MARCH 22. PHALANGE RADIO SAYS JUNBLATT IS URGING KARAME TO RESIGN.

8. ISLAMIC GROUP. ISLAMIC GROUP MET AUGUST 2 AND ANNOUNCED IT WOULD PUBLISH ITS PROGRAM AUGUST 5. (GROUP HAS BEEN HAVING DIFFICULTY ADOPTING POSITION ON QUESTION OF SYRIAN INVOLVEMENT.) GROUP WILL ATTEMPT TO PREVENT DEVELOPMENT OF SITUATION AT NABAA SUCH AS HAS TAKEN PLACE AT TELL ZAATAR.

9. METN CAMPAIGN. CHRISTIANS MAKE NO GAINS IN HIGH METN CAMPAIGN, WHERE LEFTIST SOURCES CLAIM CHRISTIANS HAVE LOST ARMORED VEHICLES AND SUFFERED NUMEROUS CASUALTIES. SYRIANS INCREASE ARTILLERY SUPPORT OF CHRISTIANS. CHRISTIANS SHELLED PALESTINIAN POSITIONS AT ALEY FROM KAHLE AND YARZEH.

10. BEIRUT AREA. HEAVIEST FIGHTING IN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT. ARTILLERY FIRE CONTINUED AT NABAA AND TELL ZAATAR (AT LEAST UNTIL CEASEFIRE FOR ICRC EVACUATION). AT NABAA, AL-MUHARRIR CLAIMS CHRISTIANS MADE LARGE ATTACK ON "PROGRESSIVE ARMENIANS" IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF BADAWI. CHAMOUNISTS SAY IN THEIR OWN COMMUNIQUE THEY ATTEMPTING "TO RELOCATE FAMILIES IN NABAA WHICH DESIRE TO RETURN TO SECTORS ALREADY LIBERATED."

11. THE SOUTH. FIGHTING IN JEZZINE AREA HAS SUBSIDED,
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BUT ARTILLERY FIRING CONTINUES. PALESTINIANS AND CHRISTIANS EACH CONTINUE ACCUSE OTHER OF STARTING FIGHTING. ARAB LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE EMPHATICALLY SUPPORTS CLAIM BY LIBYAN ARAB LEAGUE FORCE COMMANDER THAT LIBYANS HAVE NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN FIGHTING ON PALESTINIAN SIDE. GENERAL GHONEIM SAYS FLATLY THAT SYRIANS STARTED FIGHTING AND SAID THAT AL WOULD REINFORCE ITS TROOPS IN AREA "TO CONTROL THE

SITUATION." THIS IS NEW ACTIVE ATTITUDE ON PART OF
AL FORCES HERE. JEZZINE FIGHTING
SUGGESTS CHRISTIANS INTERESTED IN SOMETHING MORE
IN LEBANON THAN DEFENSE AND CONSOLIDATION OF
MT. LEBANON HEARTLAND.
HUNT

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